

Feline Mewsings #23



Feline Mewsings is a personalzine / newsletter published more or less quarterly by R-Laurraine Tutihasi, 29217 Stonecrest Road, Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90275-4936, 310-265-0766, Laurraine@mac.com, <http://www.weasner.com/>. It is distributed through FAPA and sent to other friends and family. It is available for the usual (a response of any kind, including letters, e-mail, and phone calls of comment; trade; contributions of illos, fiction, or articles; or even money: \$1.50 per issue or \$5 per year). [] if this box is checked, I need to hear from you if you wish to stay on my mailing list. A slightly modified version will be placed on the web shortly after paper publication; please let me know if you prefer just to read the web version. I can also e-mail this in Word or rtf format. Kattesmint Press #352. ©2006 R-Laurraine Tutihasi. Permission is granted to reprint or forward any part or all of this newsletter provided that it carries the following statement: "Copyright 2006 by R-Laurraine Tutihasi. Originally published in *Feline Mewsings* #23, <http://members.aol.com/felinemewsings/index.html>."

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Feline ~~M~~ewsings

#23

February 2006

* Editorial / Introduction



The first thing we did after I put the last issue to sleep was attend a Halloween party. There were some really great costumes. I present a couple of them here.



Shortly after that we attended the Autumn Ball, which is a

Regency dance event held more or less annually in Southern California. It is an all-day event with dance instruction in the morning and afternoon and the ball at night. We arrived during the afternoon dance instruction but decided not to participate. I'd developed bursitis in my left ankle and wanted to preserve it for the real thing. We joined the festivities when tea was served in



late afternoon. During tea, we had a lecture about American naval battles on the Barbary Coast (of Africa) during the Regency period. We learned about events that none of us recalled learning in school. In the evening, I ended up dancing about half the dances (out of about a dozen), most of them with Mike. These events seem to run later and later every year, and it was way after midnight when the festivities ended. But a good time was had by all.



In mid-November we helped Forry Ackerman celebrate his eighty-ninth birthday. His luncheon was well attended. Among others Ray Bradbury, Ann Robinson, George Clayton Johnson, Victor Koman, and John Landis attended.

The last two months of the year were relatively busy, as usual, with holiday activities. But we were also kept busy with health concerns. I had several physical therapy sessions and may still need a few more. I was also busy taking care of a failing Shadow. There were visits from the homeopathic vet and a couple of visits to the regular vet. Unfortunately there was only so much we could do, and Shadow finally left us two days after Christmas. We have put up a page on our web site as a memorial.

At the beginning of November, we switched our cable TV service to one with DVR, since it could now record in high definition. We had a bit of a glitch on Xmas day, but I was able to reach technical help at Cox and get the system reset. We got two free months of Cinemax and Starz with it, so I have recorded a few more movies than I might otherwise have. I think I'm probably recording a little more than before, because it is so much easier to set up than programming a VCR. As a consequence, I'm a little backed up on my viewing.

Garden work has progressed. The gardener has finished lining all the pathways. I'm still, though, having problems with the charger for my hedge pruner. Three replacements shipped to me have all died within a short time. I don't know what the next step is. I may have to buy a new hedge pruner.

New Year's weekend was quite busy and somewhat prolonged. We went to parties both on the eve and on the day. And the Tournament of Roses was on Monday. We watched from our dry living room. As you may not know if you didn't watch, it rained on the parade for the first time in fifty years. There was more wind than rain, but that only meant people got even wetter.

In mid-month we attended the unveiling of Kelly Freas's memorial. He is buried at the same cemetery as Fred Astaire. The memorial service began with military honours, as Kelly served in the US Army. Taps, unfortunately, was played on a tape with a man pretending to play – sort of the instrumental version of lip-synching. This was followed by words by friends, family, and the rabbi. Then the memorial was unveiled. Afterwards, we were invited to the widow's house for snacks. I guess there were about thirty or so people in attendance.

* * *

* Mike

Mike had a couple of short business trips in November. Since he works for aerospace, he ended his work year the Thursday before Xmas.

Mike went to Oracle twice in December.

* * *

* Local Activities

Movies

Zathura: The same day as Forry's birthday luncheon, we had a play to attend in Burbank. As we were already half way to the theatre, we decided not to drive home but see a movie in the afternoon. We chose *Zathura* as a film we'd both enjoy. It's a fun science fantasy adventure. Two quarrelsome boys are left alone at home while their father goes out to take care of business. One of them finds a space adventure game in the basement. Like in *Jumanji*, everything that happens in the game becomes real. There's a lot of excitement as the house is launched into space and invaded by aliens. Recommended for an enjoyable afternoon when you don't want anything serious or deep.

#

King Kong: We saw this on New Year's Eve. I think we both had doubts but were curious. I'd heard all sorts of praise from reviewers on the radio (KPCC—an NPR affiliate). We couldn't disagree that the film was technically excellent. However I thought the dinosaur and giant insect and bat scenes were way overdone; it would have been just right if those scenes had been cut by at least seventy-five percent. Mike brought up the fact that Ann Darrow's neck would have been broken many times with Kong carrying her around while he scampered to and fro everywhere. I also found it too emotionally gut-wrenching. I don't think I could stand to see it again. Mike liked the soundtrack and will be getting the soundtrack but doesn't know whether he wants the DVD.

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Theatre

The Grand Tour: This was our subscription season's musical. It's about a Polish Jew who had fled first to Berlin, then to Vienna, then to Paris, and now had to flee elsewhere as the Germans were about to invade the French capital. He runs into a Polish colonel who needs to get to England. Together they have a bizarre adventure. The music and dancing were really great. The starring role was acted excellently by Jason Graae, who also starred in *The Grand Hotel* last season.

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Other

Stars on Ice: This year marks their twentieth anniversary, so the theme of the show revolved around that. An attempt was made to demonstrate how each year's show develops. The featured skaters this year were Alexei Yagudin, Jaime Salé and David Pelletier, Elena Berezhnaya and Anton Sikharulidze, Todd Eldredge, Yuka Sato, Kyoko Ina and John Zimmerman, Steven Cousins, Jennifer Robinson, and Jason Dungjen. There was a good mix of humour and straight skating and a mix of popular and classical music, though it was mostly popular.

Although we enjoyed the show, we are probably not going to be doing this again any time soon. Each time we go, the drive becomes more onerous. Traffic becomes heavier each time, or at least that's the impression we have. There frequently are traffic problems that slow us down. After we reach the arena, it takes many minutes between the gate and finding a parking space. The crowd gets harder to deal with each year. It may be more psychological than anything else, but I think we need a rest.

* * *

* Loscon

This year we didn't really attend, but I had agreed to do some programming on one day. Mike had originally planned to go to Oracle that weekend, but the weather did not cooperate, so we went to Loscon together on the Saturday after Thanksgiving.

We left a little after 09h00 in the morning for Loscon. We got there before 10h00. We were checked in quickly in the green room. Mike looked over the programme and made his decisions on which ones to attend. Jacqueline Lichtenberg was there, and she and I went up to her room so she could give me the CD of one of her stories that we had discussed. Mike went to check out the dealers room. I left Jacqueline's room when a maintenance man arrived to fix a leak in her bathroom. After looking over the programme myself, I went to the fanzine lounge and left a message for John Hertz to let him know I might not be able to do the shift I had tentatively agreed to. I managed to find Mike, and we went to the art show before we



went to the first programme that interested him, which was an update on the Cassini mission.

Then we had lunch at the hotel restaurant.

After lunch I had a panel titled “How Much Is That Cyber Doggie in the Window? Or Fur vs. Ferrous”. Ed Green was the assigned moderator (my suggestion); the other panellists were Tony Cratz and Curt Steindler. The panel went much better than I had expected. Ed kept bringing up the fact that a space mission wouldn’t include something that only had a function as a pet, that it would have to be useful in some other way. Cyber pets already exist, and I said we

will probably know a lot about the value of pets before we ever consider taking any of them into space.

After that Mike went to a Heinlein panel, while I went to a Sime~Gen meeting on the second floor. After some chitchat, we read the first forty pages of a short story that Jacqueline had written for an upcoming book. Mike came up to the room after his panel had ended.

About 18h00 we went to the hotel restaurant for dinner. Afterwards we chatted for a while with John and Judith Chapman and Elst and Carol Weinstein. Then we went downstairs for the masquerade. With about fifteen entrants, it was quite good with some very nice costumes. We left when the virtual masquerade began and visited a few parties. Actually I think we at least stuck our heads into every party. In one room I conversed with Chris Garcia for a while. At another point, we stood talking with Marty and Alice Massoglia for a while. I made a point of visiting the Montreal in 2009 party for the eiswine; there was some maple liqueur as well, but that was way too sweet.



A little after ten we decided to drive back home.

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* Mailing Comments on FAPA #273:

General Request: I would like to ask any of the members who publish a paper genzine to please consider adding me to their mailing list.

Ron Parker (Revelations from the Secret Mythos, Reincarnation #1): Welcome back to FAPA, though I wasn’t around when you were here before.

Bo Stenfors (A FAPA-zine): Thanks for running the *Playboy* article, as I hadn’t seen it before.

Ben Indick (Ben’s Beat 82): We haven’t actually done any sightseeing in the Phoenix area. As I recall, Paoli Saleri’s Arcology is north of Phoenix. I was there a number of years ago.

It’s very generous of you to pay for your son’s health insurance.

Tom Feller (The Road Warrior): Since I look terrible in purple and don't care for the colour anyway, I guess I'd never want to join the Red Hat Society.

Robert Lichtman (King Biscuit Time #45): I'll back your amendment about stapling zine contributions.

I didn't realize there were so many different models of the Casio solar-powered watches. I'm not sure which of the numbers on my watch is the model number.

Robert Michael Sabella (Ride the Lightning): My favourite DC comic was the *Legion of Super-heroes*. They are available in collected hardcover editions now. My second favourite DC comic was *Superman*. The rest were also-rans for me.

Kids have so many options to fill their free time that reading just isn't as popular as it once was. Even a magazine like *Sports Illustrated* is losing readership.

Dale Speirs (Opuntia 59): In my memory, which dates only back to 1956 for the US, postal cards and post cards have had the same postage rate. Letters require slightly more postage. Some oversized post cards also require more postage.

Dick Eney (Target: FAPA): I learned the hard way not to trust intra-company mail. I once erroneously received a letter with foreign postage for my father. Instead of taking it home to give him, I put it in the company mail; my father never received it.

Our colour printer is an Epson C86. It uses DuraBrite ink. It certainly works better than our previous colour printer, which was a C80.

Eric Lindsay (For FAPA): Mike declines your Apple script offer. He's hoping Apple will improve iPhoto.

I'm glad to hear you have maxed out your savings for your retirement. Most fans, I suspect, have saved little to nothing. The American Social Security payments are not pegged to one's personal retirement savings. We get Social Security cheques if we worked at a job that paid into the system for a minimum number of years based on the wages you made. Social Security maxes out at a fairly modest wage, and any other wages you make above that do not contribute to the system. This cap has increased over the years, so I imagine there are fewer people who would max out. Social Security payments alone would not allow a retiree to live anywhere near comfortably in many parts of the country. Certainly you wouldn't have anything for any extras. In some areas of the country, it wouldn't allow you enough to pay the average rent. If you live in a house with no mortgage, you might be able to live comfortably on Social Security.

* * *



* Letters to the Editor

My replies to the letters will be enclosed in double parentheses. I will also routinely make editorial corrections in punctuation, spelling, and the like.

Leslie David, Reston, VA

9 December 2005

I downloaded the last issue of *Feline Mewsings* and was going to get around to reading it but somehow never did. I love the pretty picture on the cover; spring in AZ is the most beautiful time of the year.

Mercury has epilepsy and chews through electrical cords, and Shadow has cancer and a thyroid problem? I am so glad that Max continues to be a healthy and low-maintenance cat at twelve. The biggest trauma we had to deal with were fleas; it was so warm and so wet that the fleas were in the grass, so dogs could have brought them into the carpet in the hallway, or the maintenance men could have brought them in. However they got in, we got them out.

I had another three-day cycle of muscle tension -- back, neck, and shoulder lockup. I sure wish you could find an emergency massage therapist at one in the morning; but unfortunately the only kind I could probably get at that hour is non-therapeutic, which is not what I'm looking for. I am a fan of massage, but to me deep tissue massage sounds like a legal excuse to beat the crap out of you. I went recently and had to explain to the therapist exactly what a mechanical meat tenderizer does; unlike the wooden mallet you can use to break meat fibres by pounding, this thing literally rips through them; think cube steak.

This is a lot of bad news; got any little dark clouds overhead that follow you around?

The play sounds interesting; Moscow Cats Theatre sounds wonderful. Russians seem to be everywhere these days; my theatre buddy, Tim, and I went to see *Dracula* at the Rosslyn Spectrum, obviously in October. The group is called Synetik Theatre. I was expecting a play; instead it was more modern dance with just enough dialogue to set the scenes. Very unusual. Tim and I also saw a presentation of *A Streetcar Named Desire* at the Keegan Theatre up in Dupont Circle. We seem to be hitting the small venues these days and have decided that we need to see a happy play next time. I went to see *Othello* at the Shakespeare Theatre at the end of September by myself; Avery Brooks was playing Othello and seemed a lot happier doing live theatre than he ever was on television. Patrick Paige, the actor who played Iago, was amazing; he played him as a straight psychopath. I'd always had trouble with this play because of Iago's character; I mean, does he wake up one day and decide, "I'm going to make Othello's life a living Hell?" This made a lot more sense. He also played Macbeth, which was performed earlier this year, which I missed. TicketPlace puts out a daily list of what productions have discount tickets. If you don't mind going midweek or on short notice, you can get some really good deals. A lot of the shows we've been to have been around \$15-18. Full price to see *Othello* was \$67. A lot of the venues put their discount tickets for sale online through TicketPlace; otherwise you have to go to their booth downtown in DC, which is not convenient at all for me. Fortunately for me, Tim works in the District.

So what was the outcome of your panel? Going to the theatre and reading the programmes, it's amusing to see how some so-called expert interprets the action; I saw Edward Albee's *The Goat or Sylvia?* earlier this year, and the critic was relating the play to *Medea* (which I also saw earlier this year). When Albee was interviewed about the significance, he said it was a play about a man, a woman, and a goat.

A panel on Batman? Interesting, I've always been a DC comics fan. I'd have to say my favourite movie was the first; I was very surprised by Michael Keaton's performance; I never would have thought of him as right for the character, but he did a good job. Jack Nicholson just had fun. I liked the third only because of Jim Carey's Riddler and the last, which after wading through the philosophical BS, really kicked. I hated the George Clooney one. I haven't read any comics since I was a kid, and I've never read any of the illustrated novels (a fancy name for more expensive comics for adults).

Is there a future for Star Trek? It seems pretty played out to me at the moment; maybe we need another twenty years of people watching the reruns to make it fresh again.

Spent Thanksgiving with my friend and fellow birthday girl, Judy; her dad; and dad's girlfriend. I had dinner with them last year as well. The only problem about being invited to someone's house is that you don't get any leftovers. I did a duck, which convinced me that the only way I'll eat it again is if someone else cooks it for me; it left my oven just coated with grease.

Lots of holiday stuff going on here -- a dance studio party Saturday and the HRC party for women on Sunday; then the following weekend are a couple of parties, an open house and another dance studio party. No plans for New Year's yet, so Max and I may just settle in with some movies; or if my sister isn't doing anything, I may drive up to Philly to see her and the girls.

Hope you are having a good holiday season and are taking good care of yourself.

#

Rita Prince Winston, Venice, CA

17 December 2005

My computer has been terribly sick since last Sunday evening. It won't come up except in safe mode. Tim has been on the phone with Dell Tech Support all week running tons of diagnostics, none of which found any problem. Right now Tim is watching TV, so I'm borrowing his computer to read *Feline Mewsings* #22.

I'm sorry to hear of Shadow's pessimistic prognosis. I'm sorry to hear of your left shoulder and other problems.

Your Coppercon appears to have been full of Marty Massoglia.

"All the plots have been used" – people keep quoting various experts that there only exist three, ten, or forty-two plots in all of storytelling.

Isn't all the action in a play taking place in a short period of time one of Aristotle's rules for plays?

Some radio show that I listen to said there will be set-top converters so old analogue TVs can show shows that broadcast in digital. ((This is correct. Also if you get all your TV from cable or satellite, the company you get the service from will determine whether and when you will have to convert.))

#

Jay Kay Klein, Bridgeport, NY

27 June 2004, posted 23 December 2005

Been many a time I've intended to write to thank you for your fanzine; it's the cat's meow, to use a seventy-five year-old expression.

Which reminds me, d'ye know the ancient Egyptian word for cat? Here 'tis: transliterated into Roman letters phonetically – MIU. Now you and your cats each know one ancient Egyptian word!

At the moment I have zines 13, 14, 15, and 16 before me. Number 15 and 16 have letters by Rita Prince Winston. I hope you print and she sees this letter. A girl named Rita Prince and I were classmates in a Philadelphia grade school when ten years old. The teacher delegated us to head a school presentation called "The Prince and Klein Circus". I was absent a lot, and I came back to find I'd been replaced, and the new name was "Prince and Freed Circus."

I've often wondered what happened to her. By the letter in #15, I calculated she's around 53-55 and could conceivably be the named-after daughter of the Rita Prince I knew or named after an aunt, etc. ((I think Rita Winston is younger than fifty.))

#

Lloyd Penney, Etobicoke, ON

23 December 2005

Thank you for a paper copy of *Feline Mewsings* 22. Always a pleasure to receive it. If finances get to the point where you can't afford a paper copy to me, I'll take the PDF version of it. Less expense for you, and a little more storage space for me.

You've been having trouble with your electronics. I had been warned about the dual VCR/DVD units being easy to break down; and while our newest VCR has never worked properly, we are starting to build a small library of DVDs for our player. Our computer needs a little service, and it will get it in the new year. Windows 98 needs to have a couple of corrupted modules replaced. Yvonne had a credit card compromised a while back, and it was traced to a gas station we used to go to all the time. The worker who did it was fired, management was changed, and all is well again; but Yvonne had to change her card.

She'd had that number for over thirty years. ((I'm just about certain that my credit card problems can be traced to break-ins at the issuers' end. I don't think I've had any credit card for as long as thirty years, let alone the same credit card number.))

Rob Sawyer is very easy to talk to. Rob and I went to the same school, Ryerson Polytechnical in Toronto; I was in Journalism and he was in Radio and Television Arts. We met through the school literary journal, *The White Wall Review*; and the year that he edited it, Rob published two of my short stories. One other author I went to school with...Ed Greenwood, the D&D author. He was also in Journalism classes. Rob and his wife, Carolyn, have fannish roots; many years ago, Toronto had OSFiC, the Ontario Science Fiction Club. Robert was a moderator of the club, and Carolyn produced some of the club newsletters.

It is difficult to get onto panellists lists for conventions, even at your own local conventions. One local con, Toronto Trek, I had to stop doing panels for them... I realized that of most of the SF shows of the past five to seven years, I hadn't seen one of them. No one is interested in me talking about fanzines or anything literary there, so I decided I had nothing of value to say on a panel at that con. It's getting to be that way at many conventions I attend. Either I'm boring as hell, or attention spans are dangerously short, and I think it's a combination of both. ((Coppercon couldn't generate enough interest in several literary topics that I would have loved to have been on panels for.))

Mention of Rochester...Yvonne and I ran the con suite at Astronomicon 9 this past November. We had a good time, Spider Robinson performed his regular Beatles jam in the con suite, and we ran into a lot of old friends. Bob Eggleton was the artist GoH, and he was great. Forry Ackerman was scheduled to be a special GoH, but illness kept him at home.

My loc...after we left Windsor, I found out that Momcat had run away from home and was gone for six weeks. She had a few problems with Franky, the kitten Cindi and Vic had found, and was peeing everywhere, trying to mark her territory. She was put outside for her efforts, and she disappeared. She came back eventually, moved back in at the bottom of the pecking order, and she's three pounds lighter. I'm just happy she's still alive. Cindi reminded me that Momcat was a converted barn cat and was probably just as happy outside as in but thought to come in as the weather was getting cool, and Momcat is far from being a kitten any more.

I am behind the times...last I communicated with Gerri Balter was in TAPA, and we lost touch when I left the APA. Saw Buzz Aldrin at the International Lunar Conference in Toronto; and to be honest, the scientists who preceded him were more interesting. Buzz rambled on at length until he seemed to be mentally lost a couple of times.

I am waiting for a button from Nancy Leibowitz..."Fandom is the biggest Asperger's support group on the planet." If that button doesn't already exist, it should.

Yvonne has been able to keep the weight off, but it's been tough with it being so close to Christmas. I've gained all my weight back; but once the Christmas treats are done, I plan to go back on the low-carb diet again. Yvonne has a thyroid problem; but as far as I know, I'm pretty normal. I don't have any diseases or syndromes to brag about or blame.

C'est tout...time to get this to you for the next issue, whenever that will be. Yvonne and I hope that you and Mike have a great Christmas; and 2006 will be, IMHO, a big year for all of us. See you then.

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Carolyn Thompson, Vista, CA

31 December 2005 (received)

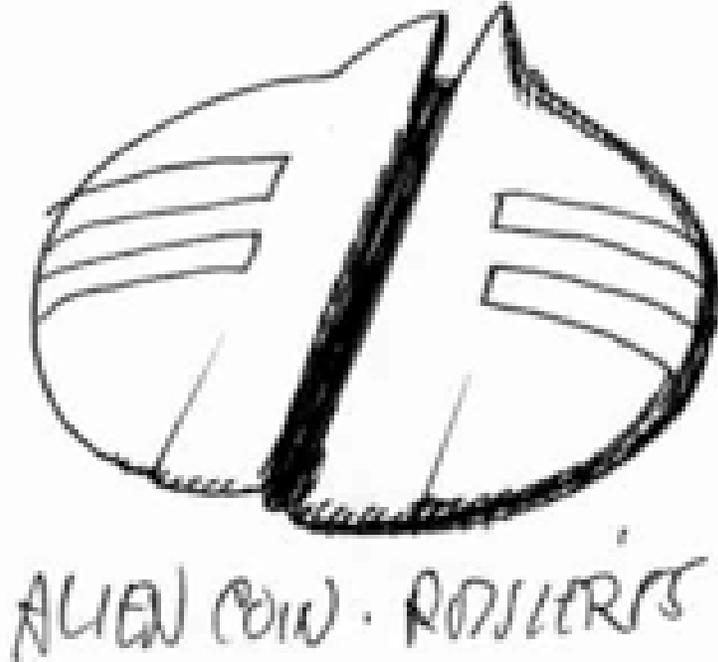
I liked the cactus on the front cover of *Feline Mewsings* #22.

My son, Douglas, who lives near Las Vegas, has bought some undeveloped desert land near Mojave, CA. That is close to Edwards Air Force Base and Tehachapi. He has Joshua trees on his property and a view of mountains. He has no plans for building any time soon. We are planning to drive down next weekend, as I am curious to see the place, but camping on the land would be difficult – no water, no good road, soft

sand spots – hard for a regular car.

Maybe we will see the space museum at Edwards. Doug works in construction projects on the Vegas airfield, and I always enjoy my trips up there. Last time he came to see me in Vista, we went to the Air and Space Museum in Balboa Park in San Diego. They have one of the returned NASA command modules.

* * *



*** Closing Remarks**

Aside from Mike's forays to Oracle, we have no travelling planned before the next issue.

I hope everyone's 2006 has got off to a good start and continues in the same vein. So far the year for us has been okay, if not great.